

I claim:

1. A method of further increasing the difficulty of importing to a secure domain digital content including watermarks which impose a degree of difficulty on illicitly importing to the secure domain the digital content, the degree of difficulty associated with the watermarks being capable of being illicitly overcome by importing to the secure domain segments of the digital content which are so short that the watermarks cannot be reliably detected, the method comprising preventing importing to the secure domain of sections of the digital content having a length less than or equal to a length associated with the length of reliable watermark detection.

2. The method of claim 1 wherein the illicit importing to the secure domain comprises recording the segments without recording the watermarks and the method is performed while there is illicit recording of the digital content.

3. The method of claim 1 wherein the illicit importing to the secure domain comprises recording the segments without playing back the watermarks and the method is performed while there is illicit playback of the digital content.

4. The method of claim 1 wherein some of the watermarks or a header associated with the digital content indicate the digital content can be copied, the method further comprising determining whether the digital content is not to be illicitly imported to the secure domain or can be legally imported to a domain, and overriding the preventing step in response to the determining step determining that the digital content can be legally imported.

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5. The method of claim 4 further including detecting the presence of a distorted watermark, and performing the preventing step in response to the distorted watermark being detected.

6. The method of claim 1 further including detecting the presence of a distorted watermark, and performing the preventing step in response to the distorted watermark being detected.

7. Apparatus arranged to be responsive to digital content including watermarks for imposing a degree of difficulty on illicitly importing to a secure domain the content, the apparatus being arranged for increasing the difficulty of illicitly importing to the secure domain the digital content, the difficulty associated with the watermarks being capable of being overcome by importing to the secure domain segments of the digital content which are so short that the watermarks cannot be reliably detected, the apparatus comprising a detector for segments of the digital content having a length equal to or less than a preset length, the preset length being so short that the watermarks cannot be reliably detected, and a signal processor responsive to the detector and the digital content for preventing importing to the secure domain at least some of the digital content segment being detected as having a length less than or equal to the preset length.

8. The apparatus of claim 7 wherein the signal processor is arranged for preventing copying of the digital content segments detected as having a length less than the preset length.

9. The apparatus of claim 7 wherein the signal processor is arranged for preventing readout of all the digital media content accompanying a segment detected as having a length less than the preset length.

10. The readout apparatus of claim 7 wherein the readout apparatus comprises a recorder for the digital content.

11. The apparatus of claim 7 wherein the readout apparatus comprises a playback unit for the digital content.

12. The apparatus of claim 7 wherein some of the watermarks or a header of a track or song of the digital media content indicate the digital content can be legally imported to a domain, the detector being arranged for determining whether the digital content is not to be illicitly imported to the secure domain or can be legally imported to a domain, the signal processor being arranged to enable importing to a domain all the digital content in response to the detector determining that the digital content can be imported.

13. The apparatus of claim 12 wherein the detector is arranged for detecting the presence of distorted watermarks, the signal processor being arranged to prevent importing to the secure domain in response to the detector detecting the presence of a distorted watermark.

14. The apparatus of claim 7 wherein the detector is arranged for detecting the presence of distorted watermarks, the signal processor being arranged to prevent importing to the secure domain in response to the detector detecting the presence of a distorted watermark.

15. The apparatus of claim 7 in combination with a recorder of digital content, the signal processor being arranged for supplying the digital content to the recorder unless the detector detects that the digital content has been illicitly importing to a secure domain.

16. The apparatus of claim 7 in combination with a playback unit of digital content, the signal processor being arranged for supplying the digital content to the playback unit unless the detector detects that the digital content is illicitly copied.

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